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SPORTS

Winchester upsets top-seeded Taunton to advance to Sweet 16 against Natick

JOE MCCONNELL | SPORTS EDITOR

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Winchester High School baseball player Steve McCabe is on the mound throwing strikes during a game against Reading at Lowell's LeLacheur Park last month. On Monday night (June 2) against top-seeded host Taunton, McCabe came in for senior captain Alex Casey to record the final out in order to secure the 6-4 victory in the Division 1 Round of 32 game. COURTESY PHOTO

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After the Winchester High School baseball team (14-8, 32nd seed) defeated the Beverly Panthers (12-8, 33rd seed) in a Division 1 preliminary round game at home May 30, 6-4, second-year head coach Ed McDonald said that was a huge win for the program.

Certainly not playing like a team that wants its season to end any time soon, the Red & Black then showed no fear going up against perennial postseason powerhouse Taunton, the home team, in the Round of 32 three nights later, where they won again by the exact same 6-4 score.

The team is now prepping to take on host Natick (13-8, 17th seed) in the Sweet 16 game Thursday night (June 5) at 7 p.m. The Red Hawks, who play in the Bay State Conference during the regular season, shutout Pope Francis (15-6, 16th seed), 4-0 in their Round of 32 game.

Against Taunton (16-7), the deuces were wild for the Winchester boys in the third, fifth and seventh innings. The Tigers scored one in the third, and three in the fifth to tie up the game at four apiece. But the visitors' last two runs in the seventh clinched the upset win against a team that has won the state title three out of the last five years, didn't get eliminated until the Round of 16 last year and was the top seed going into this year's state tournament.

"This was a statement game for the program," said McDonald. "We now believe we can compete with anyone in the state."

Senior captain Alex Casey led in every possible way against Taunton to catapult his teammates to their second postseason win. Casey went 6.2-innings on the mound to pick up the win. He allowed seven hits, three walks and four earned runs, while striking out seven. Steve McCabe relieved him with one out to go in the game to secure the save.

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“Alex (Casey) pitched the game of his life against Taunton,” said McDonald. “He competed in every inning, and was able to overcome adversity in the middle of the game to keep us in it throughout. He’s our captain for a reason, and proved it once again with this performance.”

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Winchester outhit Taunton, 11-7, and Brett Daniels and Brendan Bock powered the attack with one triple apiece. Daniels also singled twice, and knocked in two and scored two. Bock reached base one other time with a walk. Designated hitter Nolan Gannon did his part to keep the offense going with two singles and two RBI, and also walked once.

Catcher Ronan O’Connell singled in a run, along with sophomore Nick Penicaud. Casey also helped his own cause at the plate with two singles, and ended up crossing the plate once to account for another Winchester run. Third baseman Noah Seitz collected a single and a walk, and scored once.

McDonald praised the play of Gannon, his junior DH and outfielder, calling him the team’s sparkplug.

“(Gannon) is the ultimate team-first kid,” said McDonald. “He began the year in the starting lineup. He got that opportunity, and ran with it. He played so well that we couldn’t take him out of the starting lineup. His second clutch two-run single in this game ended up beating Taunton. It was a high-pressure situation, and he came through (with positive results). He also had a similar moment during the regular season with the game on the line.”

McDonald mentioned the difference in this game was his team’s a
capitalize on some of Taunton’s mistakes with timely hitting. He a
credits the bottom of the order for getting on base consistently.

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Penicaud will start the game on the mound against Natick.

“He’s been our horse all year long, and we have full faith in him to come through, once again,” said McDonald.

The Winchester coach has a simple explanation for all of this success.

“They play for each other, and their motto is 'We, not me,'” McDonald said. “There’s a full buy-in right now throughout the entire roster.”

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It was the third meeting this year between Middlesex League boys basketball rivals Lexington (16-5, 11th seed) and Winchester (17-4, 22nd seed). They split the first two during the regular season, thus making this Round of 32 postseason matchup the impromptu rubber game of this year's series, with the

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After the Winchester High qualified wrestlers competed hard over two days last weekend (Feb. 20, 21) in the State Division 1 Meet at North Andover High School, Mother Nature gave them a break to rest and recuperate with Monday's blizzard that resulted in two days off from school. There

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SPORTS

Winchester boys hockey advances to the Sweet 16 after beating Wachusett in the tournament opener

The Winchester High boys hockey team (12-9-2), the 17th seed, edged the 16th-seeded Wachusett Regional Mountaineers (18-2-1), 5-4 in a Round of 32 Division 1 state tournament game at Westborough's Northstar Ice Arena on Feb. 25. The Red & Black will now take on top seed Catholic Memorial (18-2-1)

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SPORTS

With postseason starting Friday night, WHS boys hoop seniors English, Sarpong, Burbine join Middlesex League elite

The Winchester High boys basketball team, the 22nd seed, will take on Middlesex League rival Lexington, the 11th seed, to begin the Division 1 state tournament in the Round of 32 on Friday night, Feb. 27, starting at 6 p.m. These teams are so evenly matched, beginning with the

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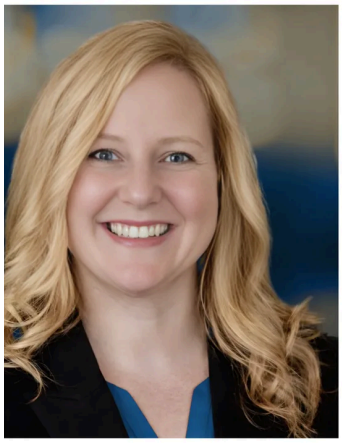

NEWS

Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER

March 4, 2026

FEATURES

'Chicago: Teen Edition' dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. Set in the 1920s, this iconic production is sure to leave the audience wanting more. Performances will

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Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents 'Syldason: You Are Welcome Here'

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On

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Rep. Michael Day helps House colleagues pass sweeping energy affordability bill

The following was submitted by the Office of Rep. Michael S. Day: Rep. Michael S. Day and

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Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

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his colleagues in the House of Representatives recently passed energy affordability legislation that would result in over $9 billion in savings for utility ratepayers over the next 10 years. The bill maintains critical

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